

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0559

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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USLO PEKING

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CH, TW

SUBJECT: ROC REACTION TO EARTHQUAKES ON THE MAINLAND

1. A LARGE-SCALE EFFORT IS UNDERWAY IN TAIWAN TO COLLECT MONEY TO CONTRIBUTE TO POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL RELIEF PROGRAMS FOLLOWING THE RECENT EARTHQUAKES IN NORTHEAST CHINA. THE FREE CHINA RELIEF ASSOCIATION (FCRA) ON JULY 29 ISSUED A CALL TO THE PEOPLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO A RELIEF FUND AND THE BANK OF TAIWAN AND ITS BRANCHES ARE ACCEPTING DONATIONS. THE FCRA, -- ACCORDING TO ONE OF ITS DIRECTORS, HAN LI-WU -- IS STILL CONSIDERING HOW BEST TO CHANNEL FUNDS COLLECTED TO THE MAINLAND. WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ASCERTAIN THE TOTAL AMOUNT COLLECTED SO FAR; BUT BASED ON THE SYMPATHY EXPRESSED TO EMBOFFS BY THOSE WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN, IT APPEARS THAT THE APPEAL IS LIKELY TO STRIKE AN UNPRECEDENTEDLY RESPONSIVE CHORD AMONG MAINLANDERS HERE, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE RELATIVES IN THE STRICKEN AREA.

2. THE LOCAL PRESS HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE RELIEF EFFORT BY PUBLICIZING THE FUND-RIASING DRIVE. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, IT HAS NOT MISSED THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT THE

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CALAMITY WITH THE ROC'S THEORY OF POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION

ON THE MAINLAND BY INTERPRETING THE EARTHQUAKE AND OTHER RECENT
NATURAL PHENOMENA AS SIGNS THAT THE LEADERSHIP ON THE
MAINLAND HAS LOST THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN.

3. COMMENT: SINCE THE GROC IS UNDOUBTEDLY AWARE THAT
THE PRC IS UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT ANY RELIEF ASSISTANCE
DIRECT OR INDIRECT FROM THE ROC, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT
THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THE FUND-RAISING DRIVE IS TO
DEMONSTRATE, ESPECIALLY TO MAINLANDERS ON TAIWAN, THAT
THE ROC IS PREPARED TO DO ALL IT CAN TO ASSIST ITS CHINESE
BRETHREN ACROSS THE STRAIT IN A TIME OF NEED.
UNGER

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